

A lot of factors have led to the change in economy of nations starting with families. These changes occur both at the levels of individual and the society at large. These changes are what are termed as social mobility and social change.

### ***SOCIAL MOBILITY***

This is the form of movement of an individuals or groups in social positions over time. It may refer to class, ethnic groups, political, religion or entire nation; and may measure health status, literacy or education, but more commonly refers to individuals or families and their change in income or economic status. It also typically refers to ***vertical mobility*** – movement of individuals or groups up (down) from one socio-economic level to another, often by change in jobs marriage and other positions. It also explains ***horizontal movement*** from one position to another within the same social level.

Social mobility is defined as movement of individuals, families, households, or other categories of people within or between layers or tiers in an open system of social stratification. Open stratification systems are those in which value is given to achieved - status characteristics in a society. The movement can be in a *downward* or *upward* direction. *Absolute* social mobility refers to the overall numbers of people who end up in a different layer of stratification from that of their parents. *Relative* social mobility refers to the differences in probability of attaining a certain outcome, regardless of overall structural changes; a society can have high absolute mobility and low relative mobility. The availability of at least some social mobility can be important in providing pathways to greater equality in societies with high social inequality.

Mobility is most often quantitatively measured in terms of change in economic mobility such as changes in income or wealth. Occupation is another measure used in researching mobility, which usually involves both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data. Yet other studies may concentrate on social class. Mobility may be *intragenerational*, within the same generation, or *intergenerational*, between one or more generations. Intragenerational mobility is less frequent, representing "rags to riches" cases in terms of upward mobility. Intergenerational upward mobility is more common, where children or grandchildren are in economic circumstances better than those of their parents or grandparents.

As defined by Barber, social mobility refers to movement, either upward or downward between higher or lower social classes; or more precisely, movement between one relatively full time, functionally significant social role and another that is evaluated as either higher or lower.

This movement is to be conceived as a process occurring over time, with individuals moving from one role and social class position to another because of what has happened to them in various kinds of social interaction. Mobility arises in social interaction, as

each individual reacts to others in a changing series of social roles.

In this sense, mobility provides the individual with more or less of the benefits which his economy and society have to offer. A rickshaw puller's son becomes a lawyer; a clerk's son becomes a doctor. In each case, a change in role between father and son provides the latter with more of the good things of life.

Mobility is enabled to a varying extent by economic capital culture. Capital could come in the following forms:

**Information/Knowledge** (such as high education)

**Human capital** (such as competence and effort in labour)

**Social capital** (such as support from one's social network)

**Physical capital** (such as ownership of tools or means of production)

**Symbolic capital** (such as worth of an official title, celebrity)

In western modern state, example of policy issue is taxation, welfare, education and public utility; each exercising great influence over the state. In other societies, religious affiliation, caste membership or geographical locations may be of central importance in the discourse social mobility.

## CLASSIFICATION OF MOBILITY

**Intra-generational Mobility** within a generation is defined as the change in social status over a single lifetime. It occurs from personal development of an individual within a family over time. The last born of a family who along the line becomes the breadwinner of his entire household is said to have achieved intra-generational mobility.

**Inter-generational Mobility** across generation is defined as a change in status that occurs from the parents to the children's generation. For instance, a professor who is the son of a school teacher can be said to have achieved inter-generational mobility.

These definitions have proven particularly useful when analyzing how social status changes from one time-period to another. Sociologists usually focus on inter-generational mobility because it is easier to depict changes across generation rather than within one.

**Vertical mobility:** this is the movement of individual, groups, families and societies up and down the socio-economic scale. These include gaining or loss of properties, income,

status and positions. When one gains, it is said to be **upward mobility** while **downward mobility** relates to lose. For example, a school teacher who gets promoted to the position of a school principal is said to be upwardly mobile on his job, both in income and status. Upward mobility is the change in person's social status resulting in higher position in other status system. However, downward mobility implies a person's social status falling to a lower position in his status system.

**Horizontal Mobility:** It is the movement of individuals across small similar socio-economic position. This may involve the change of occupation or remaining in the same occupation but in different organization, or may be the same organisation but at different location. Example is a minister of education who is transferred to preside over finance ministry or a VC of a university going to another university to work.

**Lateral Mobility:** It is the geographical movement between neighborhoods, towns or regions. Lateral mobility combines both vertical and horizontal mobility and it happens as a result of economic, religious or other social reasons. Spatial mobility is the rate of movement or migration made by a given population within a given time.

**Structural and Exchange Mobility:** This is the type of forced vertical mobility that results from a change in the distribution of status within a society, owing more to changes in society itself than to individual effort. Example is the declaration of "Free and Compulsory" secondary education. In such case, the parents in the society have no option than to get their wards enrolled. In the long run, the society is better for it but the school age students are the beneficiaries.

**Factors Responsible for Social Mobility:**

**The following factors facilitate Social Mobility:**

### **1 Motivation:**

Each individual has a desire not only to have a better way of living but also wants to improve upon his social stand. In open system such as capitalism, it is possible to achieve any status. This openness motivates people to work hard and improve upon their skills so that they can attain higher social status. Without such motivation and efforts on the part of the individual social mobility is impossible.

### **2. Achievements and Failures:**

Achievement here refers to extraordinary, usually unexpected performance, which attracts the attention of a wider public to the abilities of a person. Not all achievements will result in social mobility. Achievements affect status only if they are remarkable. For example, a poor man who has acquired wealth or an unknown writer who has won a literary prize will improve his status.

Failures and misdeeds have a similar effect on downward mobility. Fraudulent bankruptcy will remove a member of the upper classes from blue books; he will receive no dinner invitations from his peers and he will become ineligible as a marriage partner. If he is already married, his wife may divorce him. He will have to resign from his clubs and all positions he holds. But he will not become a member of the lowest stratum, although it will be difficult for him to find new association.

### **3. Education:**

Education not only helps an individual to acquire knowledge but is also a passport for occupational position for higher prestige. To become a doctor one has to have education in science subjects. Similarly, to appear in a competitive job interview, one has to be at least a university graduate.

It is only after acquiring minimum formal education that individuals aspire to occupy higher positions. In the modern industrial society in which status can be achieved, education is basic requirement.

### **5. Migration:**

Migration also facilitates social mobility. People migrate from one place to another either due to pull or push factors. A particular place may not have opportunities and facilities to improve upon. Hence, people are forced to migrate to other places to earn their livelihood. The new places where they migrate to may have different openings and opportunities.

### **6 Industrialization and modernization:**

Industrial Revolution ushers in a new social system in which people are given status according to their ability and training. No importance is given to caste, race, religion and ethnicity. Industrialization results in mass production at cheaper rate. This forces the artisans out of their work. In search of jobs they migrated to industrial towns.

The process of modernization involves use of scientific knowledge and modern technology. It also refers to rationality and secular way of life. With the improvement in technology, people engage in occupations of low prestige like scavengers discard their traditional occupations and take up occupations which are not dirty and have no polluting effects.

## **SOCIAL CHANGE**

This refers to an alteration in social order of a society. It may refer to the notion of social progress or socio-cultural evolution, the philosophical idea that the society moves forward by dialectical evolutionary means. It may refer to a paradigmatic change

in the socio-economic structure; for instance, a shift away from feudalism and towards capitalism. Accordingly, it may also refer to social revolution such as the women suffrage or the civil rights movement.

Social change may be driven by cultural, religious, economic, scientific, or technological force. More generally, social change may include change in nature, social institutions, social behaviour or social relations.

### **THEORIES OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

Basically, change comes from two sources: one source is **Random** or **Unique Factors** such as climate, weather or the presence of specific group of people. This is the kind of changes are natural and mostly act of God. Another source is **Systemic Factors**. These are human factors that bring about change. Example is the change from military dictatorship to civilian rule (democracy), compulsory education, religious migration, infrastructural revolution, urbanization, conflict etc.